

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An image input system in which a plurality of image forming apparatuses, each having a scanner function, a printer function and a network function and forming an image, and a plurality of personal computers are connected to a network,

each of the image forming apparatuses comprising:

first setting means for setting a public folder made public on the network; and

storage means for setting therein at least one public folder through the setting by the first setting means;

each of the personal computers comprising:

second setting means for setting exclusion of access by another personal computer to the public folder set in the image forming apparatus;

transmission means for transmitting to said another personal computer via the network access exclusion setting information for excluding access to said at least one public folder set by the second setting means;

reception means for receiving via the network permission/non-permission information on the access exclusion setting, which is returned from said another personal computer in response to said access exclusion setting information transmitted by the transmission means; and

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control means for executing a control for at least one public folder, on which access has been permitted in the access exclusion setting, on the basis of the permission/non-permission information on the access exclusion setting.

2. An image input system according to claim 1, wherein said storage means is a hard disk drive.

3. An image input system according to claim 1, wherein the public folder set in the storage means can be accessed by any one of said plurality of personal computers via the network.

4. An image input system according to claim 1, wherein the public folder set in the storage means stores image data, which is scanned by the scanner function when the public folder is designated by the operation of the image forming apparatus.

5. An image input system according to claim 1, wherein said second setting means, said transmission means, said reception means and said control means are operated according to an application program prestored in the personal computer.

6. An image input system according to claim 1, wherein the image forming apparatus, for which the setting by the second setting means is performed, is designated with use of an IP address.

7. An image input system according to claim 1, wherein said permission/non-permission information is

information for rejecting access by another personal computer to the public folder, the access to which by said another personal computer is excluded by the present personal computer, and for permitting access by said another personal computer to the public folder, the access to which by said another personal computer is not excluded by the present personal computer.

8. An image input system according to claim 1, wherein said control means invalidates the setting of access to a public folder, the access to which is not permitted by the permission/non-permission information on the access exclusion setting returned from any one of the other personal computers.

9. An image input system according to claim 1, wherein said control means controls reading and deletion of image data stored in at least one of said public folders, the access to which has been permitted in the access exclusion setting.

10. An image input system according to claim 1, wherein said control means controls reading and deletion of image data stored in at least one of said public folders, the access to which has been permitted in the access exclusion setting, and also controls, when there is associated setting data, execution of a function based on the associated setting data.

11. An image input system in which a plurality of image forming apparatuses, each having a scanner

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function, a printer function and a network function and forming an image, and a plurality of personal computers are connected to a network,

each of the image forming apparatuses comprising:

5 first setting means for setting a public folder made public on the network; and

first storage means for setting therein at least one public folder through the setting by the first setting means;

10 each of the personal computers comprising:

second storage means for storing access exclusion setting information which excludes access by another personal computer to the public folder set at the time of activation;

15 reception means for receiving via the network access exclusion setting information, which is sent from another personal computer;

preparation means for comparing the access exclusion setting information received by the reception means with the access exclusion setting information stored in the second storage means, and preparing permission/non-permission information that rejects access to a public folder on which the exclusion of access has been set, and that permits access to a public folder on which the exclusion of access is not set; and

returning means for returning the

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permission/non-permission information prepared by the preparation means to the personal computer from which the access exclusion setting information was received by the reception means.

5 12. An image input system in which a plurality of image forming apparatuses, each having a scanner function, a printer function and a network function and forming an image, and a plurality of personal computers are connected to a network,

10 each of the image forming apparatuses comprising:
 first setting means for setting a public folder made public on the network; and

 first storage means for setting therein at least one public folder through the setting by the first
15 setting means;

 each of the personal computers comprising:
 second storage means for storing access exclusion setting information which excludes access by another personal computer to the public folder set in the image
20 forming apparatus;

 transmission means for transmitting the access exclusion setting information stored in the second storage means to another personal computer via the network at the time of activation;

25 reception means for receiving via the network permission/non-permission information on the access exclusion setting returned to said another personal

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computer in response to the access exclusion setting
information transmitted by the transmission means; and

control means for updating the access exclusion
setting information stored in the second storage means
and executing a control for at least one public folder,
on which access has been permitted in the access
exclusion setting, on the basis of the permission/non-
permission information on the access exclusion setting,
which has been received by the reception means.

13. An image input system in which a plurality of
input apparatuses, each having a storage device for
setting a public folder to be made public on a network
and each inputting information such as image data, and
a plurality of personal computers are connected to the
network, comprising:

setting means for setting exclusion of access by
another personal computer to the public folder set in
the input apparatus;

transmission means for transmitting to said
another personal computer via the network access
exclusion setting information for excluding access to
said at least one public folder set by the setting
means;

reception means for receiving via the network
permission/non-permission information on the access
exclusion setting, which is returned from said another
personal computer in response to said access exclusion

setting information transmitted by the transmission means; and

5 control means for executing a control for at least one public folder, on which access has been permitted in the access exclusion setting, on the basis of the permission/non-permission information on the access exclusion setting, which has been received by the reception means.

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